

A Content Analysis of Consumer Technology  
Corporate Blogs as Interactive Public Relations Tools

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## **1. Research Question**

Do technology related companies implement all possible features in their corporate blogs, eliciting interactivity in the attempts to positively affect their relationships with publics?

## **2. Introduction**

Since the advent of the mainstream Internet in the 1990's, communication and interactivity have flourished. Euromonitor International (2009) found there were 227,219,000 Internet users in the United States in 2009—connecting with others around the world. Although many communication technologies have emerged from the Web, there is none that has grown more rapidly than the blog. In fact, Technorati, a blog search engine, noted in its 2008 “State of the Blogosphere” report that more than 77 million unique visitors read blogs in the United States alone (Butow & Bollwitt, 2010). Although it is a relatively new medium, developed in 1999, blogs have proven to be extremely persuasive and informative, as “they can obtain opinion leadership with huge influence over public opinion” (Xifra & Huertas, 2008, 269). Given their ability to mold and ascertain opinions of their audiences, it is clear why public relations practitioners and a growing number of organizations have adopted the blog as a communication medium.

Public relations is based on strategic two-way communication. It is a means for conflict resolution and promotion of mutual understanding between an organization and its important publics (Guth & Marsh, 2009; Grunig, 1992). Only with symmetrical communication and dialogue, can relationships be built. “The relationship between two-way symmetrical communication and dialogic communication can be seen as one of process and product. That is, two-way symmetrical communication’s theoretical imperative is to provide a procedural means whereby an organization and its publics can communicate interactively” (Kent & Taylor, 1998, 323). Interactivity is a means through which dialogue can emerge between an organization and its publics—a necessary component of public relations.

Achieving personal relationships is a primary function of public relations and blogs share that goal by supporting open communication, commitments and contact (Cho & Huh, 2010). Dialogic communication is also involved in the creation of relationships by way of a reciprocal dialogue between parties. Personal communication is built on dialogue, and public relations professionals understand the importance of personal relationships (Kent & Taylor, 1998). Because of their resemblance to interpersonal communication, blogs have the potential to be a relationship management tool (Kelleher & Miller, 2006). Based on this notion, public relations campaigns often implement blogs because they foster dialogue between organizations and their publics (Lim, 2006). Furthermore, the interactivity of web-based public relations provides an immense opportunity for practitioners to build relationships with key publics.

Interactivity and dialogue are the basis of measurement considered in this study. Through a collection of strategies found in blog and public relations literature (Cho & Huh, 2010; Xifra & Huertas, 2008; Kim, 2008), a methodology was developed to analyze the interactivity of corporate blogs, by counting their use of certain Web tools. Specifically, these blogs will be measured based on their navigation tools (RSS, hyperlinks, search tools, archives, categories, calendars, tags), multi-media tools (podcasting, audio files, videos, surveys), and communication tools (comment boxes, trackbacks, blogroll, social media). This study will analyze the interactive features of ten corporate blogs in the technology industry, applying the dialogic and relationship management frameworks described in public relations literature. The dialogic framework, as described in many communication literatures, illustrates the necessary component of dialogue in the creation of a connection between an organization and its publics (Cho & Huh, 2010). When dialogue is achieved, interactivity between an organization and its publics builds a symmetrically beneficial relationship between the two parties (Hon & Gunig, 1999). Public relations

practitioners, as well as blogs facilitate mass and interpersonal communication as a means to build relationships. As inherent managers of relationships, public relations and their use of blogs illustrate the efficacy of use of the dialogic and relationship management theories in this study.

The outcome of the study will help determine whether corporate blogs are implementing sufficient interactive tools to positively affect the communicative relationships and interactivity between an organization and its publics—supporting blogs as a beneficial public relations tool. With the implementation of the interactive tools described later in this study, a corporation is more likely to engage in dialogue with its publics, and eventually build relationships, through the variety of mediums discussed (Cho & Huh, 2010; Xifra & Huertas, 2008; Kim, 2008).

### **3. Research Summary**

#### **3.1 Two-Way Symmetrical Model of Public Relations**

Traditional public relations theory is associated primarily with media relations and creating a favorable image through elusive techniques. Yet recent literature has illustrated the changing field of public relations as one that adds value to a fully functioning society (Heath, 2006) because communication is the human activity that links people together and creates relationships (Duncan & Moriarty, 1998). James Grunig was one of the first researchers to establish public relations as a communicative practice. In one of his many books, he defines public relations as, “The management of communication between an organization and its publics...and evaluation of an organization’s communication with both external and internal publics—groups that affect the ability of an organization to meet its goals” (Grunig, 1992, 4). Communication with these publics is achieved through a two-way symmetrical model—the foundation on which relationships are built (Guth & Marsh, 2009). Only through interpersonal relationships can symmetrical public relationships, those benefiting the organization and the public, be achieved.

#### **3.2 Dialogic Communication Theory and Blogs**

Because dialogue is the basis of interpersonal relationships, and relationship building is imperative for public relations, dialogic theory is relevant to this research. Dialogic theory is

present in the foundation of many communication literatures to explain the necessity of cooperation in a communicative relationship (Kent & Taylor, 1998).

Dialogic communication illustrates the need for reciprocal messages and listening in building relationships. Kent and Taylor (1998) refer to a “Dialogic Loop” created by the content of the sender and the response of the receiver. They continue by stating that publics must have their questions and concerns addressed if relationships are to be built, and if genuine dialogue is to occur (Kent & Taylor, 1998). The loop is a continual process that develops understanding between sender and receiver. Duncan and Moriarty (1998) suggest that, “when communication is foremost and listening is given as much importance as saying, interactive relationships become the focus” (2).

In an interpersonal relationship, “Dialogue’s emphasis on multivocality, open-endedness, human connection, and the co-creation of meaning allows group members to explore more fully the complexities of other people’s commitments and perspectives as well as their own” (Black, 2008, 94). The personal nature of blogs allows them to function in the same way. A blogger represents a dialogical self by creating self-defining stories during interactions with readers (Lim, 2006). Lim proceeds by stating that the goal of the dialogical self is not achieved through persuasion or coercion, but in the mutual understanding and appreciation of different viewpoints.

Yang & Lim (2009), who surveyed 314 students at four large public universities, found that the dialogical self eventually led to relational trust mediated by interactivity. Effective blog-mediated public relations is generated through the “dialogical self portrayed in blog posts” (Yang & Lim, 2009, 355). Therefore, the interactivity of blogs is the key factor in building dialogue and relationships. Responding sincerely to feedback and respecting the opinions of readers, organizational bloggers will generate interactivity. Thus, implementing an organizational blog



representing a dialogical self, instead of a persuasive self, ultimately helps to cultivate and nurture relationships with key publics (Lim, 2006).

Therein lies the connection between the dialogic theory and the function of public relations as a relationship building, two-way communication system. “The relationship between two-way symmetrical communication and dialogic communication can be seen as one of process and product” (Kent & Taylor, 1998, 323). That is, two-way symmetrical communication attempts to provide a procedure whereby an organization and its publics can communicate interactively. Dialogic communication theory and its goal to increase interpersonal relationships, applies to this research in that, blogs have the inherent ability to increase dialogue through its interactive tools, mimicking an interpersonal relationship.

### **3.3 Definition of a Blog**

In the last few years, blogs have become the fastest growing tools of the Web and have emerged as an important communication mechanism used by an increasing number of people (Cohen & Krishnamurthy, 2006). The word “blog” is short for “weblog”, which Jorn Barger coined in 1999. Barger explained a blog to be, “a webpage where a web-logger logs all the other webpages she finds interesting” (Jost & Hipolit, 2006). In other words, this single site contains several related pages accessible from the main entry point page. Different from an ordinary web page, a blog is constantly updated as well as its links to other sites that are also changing (Cohen & Krishnamurthy, 2006).

Due to the complexity of the blogosphere, it is almost impossible to accurately estimate the total number of blogs forming this collaborative network. But, established blog search

engines, such as Technorati, track more than 133 million blogs worldwide (Fieseler, Fleck and Meckel, 2009). Further research by Fieseler, Fleck and Meckel (2009), claim that almost one out of two blogs is abandoned after 3 months, but a new blog is set up every 1.4 seconds. These numbers demonstrate the rising importance of user-generated content, yet illustrate the difficulties of reaching a verifiable blog count (Fieseler, Fleck & Meckel, 2009).

In their analysis of what they call “the Blogistan”, the global network of blogs, Cohen and Krishnamurthy (2006) reveal that a blog is one long web page partitioned into archives. Blog characteristics include entries that are arranged in reverse chronological order and threaded dialogue, allowing readers to comment on posts (Kent, 2008). Cho and Huh (2010) describe blog features as including: “easy-to-use content management systems, archive-oriented structure, reverse chronological order, links to other blogs, and ease of responding to previous blog postings” (2010, 31).

Initially, web-logs were authored by only one person and resembled personal diaries containing the author’s personal reflections as a form of self-expression (Cho & Huh, 2010). Although these types of blogs remain prominent, the mass interconnectedness of the blogosphere has attracted organizations to implement the medium as a tool of their own.

Corporate blogs are different than personal blogs in that they are endorsed by a company and are posted by a person or group of people who are affiliated with the company (Cho & Huh, 2010). Although corporate blogs are indeed devoted to a single company, their tone and structure remain informal. Corporations realized the potential of this webbed social media tool because of its power to set up open dialogue with consumers (Xifra & Huertas, 2008). Blogs give companies the opportunity to understand the thoughts and feelings of their customers. Porter, Sweetser and Chung (2009) recount the blogging fiasco of Kryptonite, a bike lock manufacturer.

Bloggers revealed to the company that the Kryptonite lock could be opened with the use of a ballpoint pen. Becoming an active listener and a responsive business enables companies to meet unmet needs and gauge public opinion (Rubel, 2009). Without the use of blogs, Kryptonite may have had a disaster on their hands. But instead, it reacted quickly to blogosphere rumors and changed the design of its locks. Interacting in a real dialogue is one of the greatest strengths a blog can offer a corporation in building and improving relationships (Sweetser & Metzgar, 2007).

Corporate blogs also function as a medium with which organizations can send controlled messages to their publics. Blogs allow companies the opportunity to maneuver around the use of traditional media and send the intended message directly to audiences. General Motors Director of New Media, Michael Wiley said, “Companies are completely losing control of their messages, and one way to get into the game is by blogging” (Guth & Marsh, 2009, 364).

### **3.4 Blogs as Public Relations Tools**

The growing popularity of blogs has forced the medium upon traditional media creators. Research indicates that journalists have begun using blogs and other social media to gather background information, check facts, find sources, and generate story ideas (Lariscy et al, 2009). Because journalists use blogs for information, public relations practitioners must undertake blogs as yet another medium with which to deliver a message to the public.

Steve Rubel, Senior Vice President of Edelman, a global public relations firm, considers bloggers today as an important part of the media ecosystem (Rubel, 2009). It is becoming the norm for public relations practitioners to pitch story ideas to bloggers. Blogs provide public

relations practitioners with a defined public that are interested in the topic. Pitching to bloggers is an effective way to reach captive audiences. It is fitting that practitioners would begin to engage bloggers as they have traditional media outlets (Porter et al, 2007). Yet this use of blogs remains a one-way relationship.

Steyn, Salehi-Sangari, Pitt, Parent and Berthon (2010) discussed the emerging Social Media Release (SMR) as a public relations tool. Although the SMR is not yet a generally accepted public relations tool, its establishment illustrates the power of bloggers as valid creators and distributors of news (Steyn et al, 2010). Whether or not public relations practitioners agree to use the SMR, most agree that bloggers have become another mouthpiece of information.

Many organizations have also begun to capitalize on the power of blogs as informative devices. Between 2006 and 2008, the number of *Fortune 500* corporations with blogs doubled (Cho & Huh, 2010). In the same study, Cho and Huh (2010), found that the majority of corporate blogs are topic oriented, rather than personal journals or community blogs. This suggests that corporations prefer the high level of control provided by topic-oriented blogs. Unfortunately, blogs used as static pages of information, like a website, have been criticized for being overly promotional (Lee et al, 2006) and without communicative dialogue. “Without a dialogic loop in Webbed communication, Internet public relations becomes nothing more than a new monologic communication medium, or a new marketing technology” (Kent & Taylor, 1998, 325). As previously noted, dialogue and interactivity are necessary components in building relationships.

Although the prior literature describes the functionality of blogs as one-way communication devices like traditional media, blogs can easily be used to create dialogue. By utilizing social media tools and an informal and personal approach, as in journal-style blogs, corporations can enable interactivity and feedback (Doostdar, 2004, 654). Through efficient use

of blog-related social tools—RSS feeds, hyperlinks, search, archives, calendars, tags, audio files, videos, surveys, comment boxes, trackbacks and blogrolls—public relations practitioners and corporations have begun to view blogs as unique devices facilitating two-way communication with consumers.

Blogs offer a corporation a strategic channel to directly communicate with its publics in an intimate way that resembles interpersonal communication (Kelleher & Miller, 2006). Hence, blogs enable public relations practitioners to fulfill the role of engaging publics in a two-way symmetrical dialogue. Engagement is achieved through the interactive elements woven into a corporate blog (Cho & Huh, 2010). That is when long lasting relationships will be established.

#### **4. Research Methodology**

Dialogic communication supports relationship building between organizations and publics. Blogs cannot function without discussion. Comment fields allow for the exchange of ideas, which in essence defines the difference between a blog and a webpage. Since blogs are by nature interactive and evoke two-way communication between readers and writers, they are formidable tools for building relationships. This is why many public relations practitioners have come to realize that blogging is not just a fad and have recognized a growing trend of blog adoption in the industry (Yang & Lim, 2009). Because interactivity is essential for the establishment of relationships, the measurement considered in this study are ones that support the interactivity of blogs.

To successfully analyze the content of ten corporate blogs, a variation of the measurement system derived by Cho and Huh (2010) will be used. Using a three-point scale, they indicated the level of implementation of a variety of blog tools, where ““0” indicated a low level of implementation, “1” indicated a medium level, and “2” indicated a high level” (Cho & Huh, 2010, 36). Below, Table 1 provides a more detailed explanation of how the scoring was operationalized for each of the categories of blog tools—navigation, multimedia and communication.

Table 1

Interactivity Measures	High (Score = 2)	Medium (Score = 1)	Low (Score =0)
Navigation Tools (Cho & Huh, 2010, 36) RSS Hyperlinks Search Archives Categories Calendars Tags	Providing 5 or more features	Providing 4 or 3 features	Providing 2 or fewer features
Multimedia Tools (Xifra & Huertas, 2008, 272) Podcasting/Audio Files Video Surveys	Providing 2 or more features	Providing 1 feature	None
Communication Tools Comment Boxes (Kim, 2008) Trackbacks (Xifra & Huertas, 2008, 272) Blogroll (Cho & Huh, 2010, 36) Social Media Links	Providing all 4 features	Providing 3 or 2 features	Providing 1 or fewer features
*Scoring modeled after Table I. (Cho & Huh, 2010, 37)			

The three categories were developed after the analysis of a collection blog and public relations literature (Cho & Huh, 2010; Xifra & Huertas, 2008; Kim, 2008). The literature described blog tools that increase the interactivity of blogs. These tools include navigation tools; RSS, hyperlinks, search tools, archives, categories, calendars, tags (Cho & Huh, 2010, 36), multi-media tools; podcasting, audio files, videos, surveys (Xifra & Huerta, 2008, 272), and communication tools; comment boxes (Kim, 2008), trackbacks (Xifra & Huerta, 2008, 272), and blogrolls (Cho & Huh, 2010, 36) and links to other social media websites.

*Fortune* annually lists the top 500 U.S. companies in what is called the *Fortune* 500. These companies are considered leaders not only in their respective industries, but also in the use of information distribution (Lee et al, 2006). The ten corporate blogs analyzed in this study belong to technology related companies listed on the *Fortune* 500. These blogs are publicly available, not internal, which was a necessary factor in viewing the entirety of each blog. The corporate blogs include those of Amazon.com, Cisco Systems, Dell, eBay, Google, Hewlett Packard, Intel, Microsoft, Oracle, and Xerox. Table 2 displays the scores received by each blog within the three categories and the total score achieved by combining the scores from the three categories. The following section describes these features with greater detail and examples.

Table 2

<b>Corporation</b>	<b>Navigation Score (out of 2)</b>	<b>Multimedia Score (out of 2)</b>	<b>Communication Score (out of 2)</b>	<b>Total Score (out of 6)</b>
Amazon.com	2	0	1	3
Cisco Systems	2	2	2	6
Dell	2	0	1	3
eBay	2	0	1	3
Google	2	1	0	3
Hewlett Packard	2	1	1	4
Intel	2	1	1	4
Microsoft	1	0	0	1
Oracle	2	1	1	4
Xerox	2	1	0	3

Applying the dialogic interactivity framework, as it refers to blogs and using the three-point scale, this study attempts to analyze features of ten corporate blogs in the technology industry as they influence relationship management.



## 4.1 Navigation Tools

The data analysis within the category of Navigation Tools reveals a generally accepted system of blogging. Each of the tools measured (RSS, hyperlinks, search, archives, categories, calendars, and tags) were represented in at least one blog. A total of nine blogs scored high with the use of five navigation tools (55.5%) or six navigation tools (44.4%). One blog (Microsoft) received a middle score because it only utilized four navigation tools (hyperlinks, search, archives, and tags) of the seven possible tools.

Of the 50% of total blogs that used five navigation tools (Amazon.com, Cisco Systems, Dell, eBay, and Xerox), one used categories, two used calendars, four used RSS, four used search, four used tags, and all five used hyperlinks and archives. Of the 40% of total blogs that used six navigation tools (Google, Hewlett Packard, Intel, and Oracle), all four used RSS, hyperlinks, search, archives, categories, and tags, and none used calendars.

Therefore, of all ten blogs analyzed, 100% have hyperlinks, 100% have archives, 90% have search boxes, 90% have tags, 80% have RSS, 50% have categories, and 20% have calendars. It can be inferred that hyperlinks, archives, search boxes, tags and RSS feeds are the most popular navigation tools used by *Fortune* 500 technology companies, while organizing information by categories and calendars is implemented less.

## 4.2 Multimedia Tools

From the data collected in the analysis of the multimedia tools used by ten corporate blogs, 50% of blogs (Google, Hewlett Packard, Intel, Oracle and Xerox) used one multimedia

tool, 40% (Amazon.com, Dell, eBay, and Microsoft) used zero multimedia tools, and 10% of blogs (Cisco Systems) used two multimedia tools. Although only three multimedia tools (audio, video, and surveys) were considered in the analysis, there is a considerable lack of use among a large portion (40%) of the ten corporate blogs.

Of the 50% of total blogs that used one multimedia tool, receiving a medium score, 20% (Oracle) had podcasts and 80% (Google, Hewlett Packard, Intel and Xerox) had video. The 10% of blogs that used two multimedia tools (Cisco Systems), receiving a high score, implemented both podcasts and video in its blog. Of the six blogs that did implement at least one multimedia tool, 33% (2 of 6 blogs) use podcasts and 83% (5 of 6 blogs) use video in its blogs. Considering all ten blogs, 50% have embedded video, 20% have podcasts, 0% have surveys, and 40% have no multimedia tools at all—receiving the lowest score, zero.

#### **4.3 Communication Tools**

All of the communication tools (comment boxes, trackbacks, blogroll, and links to other social media) described in Table 1 were implemented by at least two of the corporate blogs. The majority of blogs (60%) use three communication tools, followed by the 30% of blogs who use two communication tools—giving both groups of blogs the medium score of a one. Ten percent of blogs use all four tools, giving Cisco Systems the only high score of two points.

Of the 60% of total blogs, which used three of four communication tools (Amazon.com, Dell, eBay, Hewlett Packard, Intel and Oracle), all six blogs use comment boxes, and have links to other social media websites, five use a blogroll, and one uses the trackback feature. Of the 30% of total blogs, which use two of four communication tools (Google, Microsoft, Xerox), all

three have links to other social media, two have a blogroll, one uses comment boxes, and none have the trackback feature. Ten percent of the blogs, which equates to one blog (Cisco Systems), used all of the communication features: comment boxes, trackbacks, blogroll, and other social media. Therefore, of all ten blogs, 100% have links to other social media, 80% have comment boxes, 80% have blogrolls, and 20% have trackback features.

## 5. Discussion

Interactivity is described as a relationship between two entities (Kennedy, 2004). In this case, interactivity is achieved through the tools featured on a corporate blog and the cognition of its user. The main purpose of this study is to understand how organizations that adopt blogs are implementing tools designed to encourage dialogue and interactivity.

By engaging individuals, organizations can play a substantial role in the collective exchange of ideas with publics. A variety of tools are readily available to involve members of society in a collaborative dialogue. But if relationships are the objective, then impersonal mass communication must be supplemented by “personal customized communication that by definition is interactive” (Duncan & Moriarty, 1998).

Organizations and each member of its publics will be best served by being “reflective, integrative, and collaborative” (Heath, 2006, 100). Blogs help achieve this goal by providing easy navigability of the site, information through multimedia, and generating discussion through communication tools. Including interactive tools within a blog is important because in the blogosphere, not every blog warrants interactivity (Yang & Lim, 2009, 347). Only by engaging dialogue can blogs function to their potential.

A study by Yang and Kang (2009) constructed a measurement scale of blog engagement. Their findings “suggest that interactive blogs can enhance self-company connection, positive attitudes toward the company and supportive word-of-mouth intentions” (324). It is becoming more and more common for *Fortune* 500 companies to begin using blogs. Whether it is a single personality blogging for his or her company, or a public relations agency working to enhance the online image of the company, blogs are important in branding (Bulik, 2008).

Encouraging relationships with publics and building engagement with brands is the function of public relations. Reaching smaller numbers of the right people is far more valuable than reaching millions of faceless eyeballs through traditional means such as advertising. Consequently, “the value of advertising is declining, and the value of friendships and contacts and engagement is on the rise” (Paine, 2009). It is about the quality not the quantity of people reached, and new media such as blogs allow corporations to build quality relationships.

A corporate blog can be defined as a blog endorsed explicitly or implicitly by a company; and posted by one person or group of people who are affiliated with the organization but share most of the same characteristics of a personal blog (Cho & Huh, 2010). Most corporate blogs are adopted for product development, customer service, thought leadership and promotion (Lee et al, 2006). All of the blogs analyzed in this study follow the description provided by Cho and Huh (2010) and Lee, Huang, and Lee (2006) in that they are all written by a group of employees and provide information about the industry, ask for feedback to share and develop new ideas, all while promoting company products and services. Since all ten blogs seem to have been created to function for similar reasons, are updated by a group of people, and belong to the same industry, a more even process of evaluation and critique was generated. This way, the results of the study should be more credible.

## **5.1 Navigation Tools**

Navigation tools improve the efficiency and effectiveness of systems. These devices allow the user to move easily within the page and order information in ways that are easily understood and intuitive (Hallahan, 2001). Enabling ease of use by implementing user-friendly

tools, represents a corporations efforts to make user interaction more enjoyable. “The most successful blogs – those pulling in millions of visitors – are those that manage to give their readers greater worth, both through the manner in which the content is presented and organized, and through the social interaction resources on offer to users” (Xifra & Huertas, 2008, 273). In other words, the usability of a web device, such as a blog, is directly linked to the interactivity and efficacy of a blog. If the blog is easy to navigate, users are more likely continue their search of information.

The user-friendly navigation tools considered in this study include “Really Simple Syndication (RSS), hyperlink within posts, search, archive, categories, calendar, and tag” (Huh & Cho, 2010, 36). Through the analysis of the ten corporate blogs, it was found that navigation tools are the most implemented tools across the three categories of measured tools. Each blog used at least four of seven navigation tools, whereas 40% of blogs used no multimedia tools, and 30% of blogs used only half, two of four, of the possible communication tools.

Tools that ease the usability and the functionality of blog pages helps audiences process information, allowing an understanding of message content. “This is particularly important when messages are delivered through a complex communications vehicle, where audiences enjoy considerable license to decide which parts of messages they will focus on” (Hallahan, 2001, 236). The easier the blog is to navigate, the more users are likely to stay committed to a page long enough to interact with it.

*Hyperlinks.* Hyperlinks, used by 100% of the blogs, provide content critical for increased usability and information. “In the blogging world, providing resources that readers can access with a click is valued for its own sake” (Canavor & Meirowitz, 2010). By using hyperlinks within the body of a blog post, readers who are particularly interested in a topic can click to learn

more about the subject by being lead to another page or website with additional information. Hyperlinks also increase interactivity because they allow users to navigate the page in the manner they see fit, learning information and interacting with the blog the way that makes the most sense to them.

*Really Simple Syndication.* RSS is another popular tool among blogs, used by 80% of the blogs, that provides yet another manner in which readers can interact with the blog. RSS, which stands for Really Simple Syndication, is just that – a very easy way to distribute news content to people, rather than requiring them to visit a website (Grabowicz et al, 2009). The RSS feed delivers the headline of each blog to the user as soon as it is posted. The eight blogs that provide their users with RSS, are in essence, allowing their consumers to be more personally and directly informed by the company. Organizational blogs can win over publics and improve relationships employing a responsiveness factor. Establishing and regularly updating a blog gives the impression that an organization is not shying away from discussion—good or bad (Sweetser & Metzgar, 2007). RSS feeds illustrate the quickness of updates made by corporations. A blog that is seldom updated is less likely to attract readers’ interest, resulting in less interactivity (Yang & Lim, 2009).

*Archives, Categories, Calendars, Tags.* Cho and Huh (2010) state that the use of navigation tools creates openness, trust and credibility between an organization and its publics. “Openness has been found to be one of the key characteristics of communication behaviors that build trust in both interpersonal and organization public relations” (Cho & Huh, 2010, 34). Companies disclose corporate information to publics and publics are encouraged to disclose their thoughts and feelings. This creates interaction of a two-way communication relationship—facilitating both interpersonal and mass communication. Therefore, using tools such as archives

(100%), categories (50%), calendars (20%) and tags (90%), which allow users to see all ordered previous posts, increases the openness between a corporation and its consumers.

*Search.* Searching the Internet has become a phenomena and business for companies such as Google and Microsoft. Search engines have created a user expectation for the option to search within a website, and blogs are no exception. Ninety percent of the blogs analyzed have search boxes, and one blog (Cisco Systems) even provided the option to search by post or by author. This tool allows users to find exactly what they are looking for instead of roaming the blog aimlessly. The only blog (Amazon.com) that did not have the option to search is limiting its usability and potential to effectively meet the needs of its readers.

The four blogs (Google, Hewlett Packard, Intel, and Oracle) that used six of the seven navigation tools have the increased ability to maintain their blog readers. On the other hand, Microsoft, the only blog that used four of seven navigation tools would benefit its users by implementing RSS, categories and calendar options. RSS, hyperlinks and archives, provide readers with new, other and past blog posts. Search, categories, tags, and calendars organize information, making it easy for users to find information. Together these tools increase ease of use and satisfaction, therefore increasing interactivity between a corporate blog and its readers.

## **5.2 Multimedia Tools**

As it concerns corporate communications, it is challenging to develop “an organization that can participate as a responsible rhetor adding value to the beliefs, attitudes, and values that define and direct individual and collective behavior” (Heath, 2006, 107). Yet, multimedia tools provide multiple channels to deliver information to the public and allow corporations the



opportunity to influence public opinion. The multimedia features included in this study are audio/podcasts, video and surveys. By using such tools, organizations can provide publics with all the information surrounding a topic so they can make informed decisions regarding the corporation. As a communicative organization, readers can become fully informed and be prepared to comment freely and intelligently in the public dialogue provided within the structure of a blog.

In their exploratory research of blogs as public relations tools, Xifra and Huertas (2008) state that, “Blogs are multimedia. They contain a mélange of texts, audio files, videos, graphics and photos. And all of these interactive resources comprise a new communicative language that breaks through the barriers of textual and audiovisual communication” (272). The multimedia ability of blogs lends itself to communicating more effectively with publics and eliciting interactivity between a blog and its readers. Unfortunately, only 60% of the blogs analyzed utilize the multimedia tools available to them. The remaining 40% of non-users, place themselves in the category of one-dimensional written blogs.

*Audio.* Blogs are tools searched out by consumers. These consumers are interested in the blog topic and look to increase or share knowledge with a group of similar people. Audio tools, such as the podcast, provide these consumers with another form of information with which to digest. Podcast is the combination of “the words “pod” as in Apple’s iPod, and “broadcasting” (Nye, 2005). Podcasting is a simple and effective way to use audio to tell a story. Through the use of portable music players, like the iPod and other .mp3 players, podcasts extend the reach of a blog post beyond the use of a computer.

Two (20%) of the organizational blogs analyzed used podcasts in their dialogic communication with readers, or in this case, listeners. Oracle and Cisco Systems provide

downloadable audio files at the top of their blog pages. This system provides these corporations with another avenue of building a loyal audience. “Once a user subscribes to your podcast series, either through iTunes or your web site or blog, every new episode appears on the user’s computer without any additional interaction” (Lesle, 2008). It is a simple method of informing a public with valuable information regarding the company and industry news. When consumers are well informed, through the use of a variety of tools, they will join the integral communication dialogue with an organization.

Because all of the organizations are within the technology industry, it seems logical that they are aware of the podcast and understand its use. Therefore, the lack of use of the podcast among these corporate blogs (80%), can assume podcasts are found to be a worthless tool. Other possibilities include insufficient time or resources of employees to maintain and create podcasts for the company blog. There are many probable situations limiting the use of podcasts, but more research should be completed to understand the reasons why.

*Video.* The most widely used multimedia tool among the blogs analyzed is video embedded within blog posts. Of the six blogs that used multimedia tools, five (83%) used video. Google, Intel, Hewlett Packard, Xerox, and Cisco Systems provide readers with an additional form of information through the use of video. Using videos to display information about products and services is more attractive to users and therefore more interactive (Xifra & Huertas, 2008). As seen by traditional news websites, audiences frequently prefer information in the form of video. Yet, video hosted on a blog, provide organizations with their own media outlet free from constraints of traditional media. Bloggers can influence public debate and “bring a story to prominence without the blessing of mainstream media gatekeepers” (Bonk, 2008, 67). Videos

give organizations the opportunity to create a controlled message, easily delivered to the defined public of a blog.

Blogs provide a forum for discussion. Yet, both the corporation and the public must share their positions, so dialogue can emerge and a relationship can be built. Disseminating well thought out opinions gives outsiders new insights into the companies, enhancing corporate credibility and trust (Lee et al, 2006). Therefore, by explaining its opinions, through video or other tools, a corporation is inviting its publics to respond.

*Survey.* None of the blogs analyzed in this study contained surveys. Although it is an interactive tool (Xifra & Huertas, 2008), a survey can be seen as unimportant to blog readers and a waste of time. The fact that surveys are used solely for the benefit of the organization could also be a factor in readers' unwillingness to take a survey, and therefore forcing companies to remove surveys from their blogs. The complete lack of usage of surveys among these ten blogs (100%) could also illustrate a general dislike for surveys or unawareness of the tool. Future research would have to be completed to measure survey preferences of blog readers and creators.

### **5.3 Communication Tools**

Communication has always played a role in attracting and keeping customers, but advances in new media and computer technologies, such as the blog, have revolutionized the communication strategies in public relations (Duncan & Moriarty, 1998). Two-way communication features such as comment boxes, trackbacks, blogrolls encourage and facilitate the open communication between blog authors and visitors (Cho & Huh, 2010). Blogs allow publics to engage an organization in dialogue as "an informed partner" (Kent & Taylor, 1998,

328). Organizations have come to not fear the customer, but instead be grateful of the opportunity blogs have provided them with—to hear directly from the public. Blogs and their communication tools are a unique aspect of the Internet and public relations is taking full advantage of them. One hundred percent of the blogs analyzed have at least two of the four communication tools discussed in the research methodology.

*Comment Boxes.* One of the greatest strengths of a blog is its natural function as a discussion board and platform for debate—an ability derived from the ‘comment box’. Blog comments are viewed as essential to the interactive nature of blogs (Kim, 2008) and 80% of the blogs analyzed in this study implement comment boxes. In their book of nine suggestions for motivating participation of the online crowd, Libert and Spector (2010) state that, “companies need to make sure that contrary opinions are encouraged, that members start challenging the revealed wisdoms of the group. It’s in the play of argument and counterargument that fresh ideas rise to the surface” (6).

Comments are as much about people communicating and interacting with each other, as they are just reacting to a corporation’s blog post. They engage people in a conversation about a topic, recognizing that a story does not end with online, but instead “it is a starting point for generating commentary and contributions by the public” (Grabowicz et al, 2009). This conversation is example of the dialogic loop. It gives publics the opportunity to question organizations and organizations can respond to those questions. Dialogic communication can only take place through blogs with the commitment of the organization (Kent & Taylor, 1998). The 20% of organizations who do not use comment boxes in their blogs, Google and Microsoft, are destroying the basic function of a blog as a two-way communication device.

Comment boxes help organizations understand the customer, as they are the only way for visitors to share their thoughts and feelings with a corporate blogger (Huh & Cho, 2010). Comments allow corporations to quickly receive feedback and make changes that benefit the customer, creating what Hallahan (2001) calls a “direct response mechanism” (231). Also considered “listening posts” (Porter, Sweetser & Chung, 2009), blogs and their comment boxes must be actively watched. “The difference between a good blog and a great blog has less to do with the value, tone and frequency of posts and a lot to do with how an organization demonstrates its listening, reflecting and addressing related discussions” (Cass et al, 2007, 2).

Although 80% of the corporate blogs have comment boxes, some blogs contain policy statements on blogging or employee bloggers that do not allow comments on their own posts. These restrictions inhibit the open two-way communication provided by comment boxes. A greater number of Hewlett Packard bloggers do not allow comments on their posts, than those that do. HP also has a policy statement describing its disapproval of profanity. Ebay and Dell will not allow comments unless readers have made an account with the company. Below the surface, even some the blogs offering the open comment function, are not really open to two-way communication (Cho & Huh, 2010). Corporate blogs without the comment function are in essence another form of a corporate website, where promotion is its primary purpose.

*Blogroll.* A blogroll is a list of external links posted on a blog's main page. “Bloggers use this feature for building and maintaining their online social networks by linking their blogs to their friends’ or those with similar topic interests” (Cho & Huh, 2010, 36). A blogroll is an excellent way for a corporate blogger to compile a list of other blogs he or she finds would be important or interesting to his or her followers. Building a community of common interests is

beneficial to the relationship and communication between the corporate blogger, other bloggers and all of their audiences.

In the analysis of blogs, 80% contained a blogroll. But as with the comment boxes, there are constraints restricting the full communicative function of the blogroll. Ebay and Oracle have blogrolls linked to internal sources only, such as corporate websites and the companies' most frequent bloggers. Only some of Intel and Hewlett Packard's bloggers have blogrolls connected to their posts. On the other hand, Cisco Systems, Dell, Google, and Microsoft, have blogrolls linked to other company blogs and websites, the personal blogs of employees, and external technology blogs. These results suggest that, although the majority of corporate blogs have blogrolls to facilitate networking, a handful of blogs are connected rather internally. This limitation on the open, two-way communication of blogs, creates more of a corporate website rather than a blog, illustrating that corporations seem to prefer one-way communication.

*Social Media.* A blog is based on an open social system, maintaining interaction with its external environments. These environments are other social software systems including video, photo, bookmarks and human networks such as YouTube, Facebook, and Delicious (Kim, 2008). By using these other social media systems, bloggers can enable a larger network of followers.

A Pew Research Center study discovered that 47% of online adults use social networking sites, up from 37% in November 2008. Among adult profile owners, 73% have a profile on Facebook, 48% have a profile on MySpace and 14% have a LinkedIn profile (Lenhart et al, 2010). The magnitude of social media usage has made a great impact on the world. Corporations have begun to transform the traditionally considered online threat into a prosperous opportunity. Although they may have once been skeptical of the technology, companies now understand the relationship between social media tools and their users (Venkatraman, 2009).

All of the corporate blogs analyzed in this research have integrated other social media into their blogs. The most popular social media site used among the ten blogs is Twitter, a micro-blogging website. “By choosing the Twitter icon at the bottom of a blog post, readers can share a link to the blog on their own personal page on the Twitter website as a “tweet”. The user’s followers will instantly see the “tweet” and the story that originated on the blog will now reach web users who may not be within the audience of the blog” (Grabowicz et al, 2009). Other social media sites found among the ten corporate blogs include Facebook, YouTube, GoogleBuzz, and MySpace.

All of the corporate blogs, except Hewlett Packard, implemented bookmarking and aggregation social mediums as well. Aggregator websites allow users to select and share blog posts they deem to be the most important. Readers can click the icon of websites such as Newsvine, Digg, Delicious and StumbleUpon, to submit the story for inclusion in the listings by aggregators. (Grabowicz et al, 2009). Although most blogs contained a handful of these social mediums, Oracle’s blog provided 260 ways to share or bookmark its blog posts.

The results imply that these ten corporations value the integration of social media tools within their blogs. Each has transformed its blog into a social media hub by incorporating a number of Web 2.0 tools, which will support their long-term effects on information management (Cass et al, 2007). Providing blog readers with all possible options for sharing information learned from a corporate blog is beneficial to all.

## 6. Conclusion

The inherent dialogic nature of blogs gives them the ability to function as a communicative Web device. From the corporate communication perspective, blogs provide companies with the ability to connect and communicate with consumers in a more personal and informal way. This strength should further continue the use of corporate blogs. If used to promote interactivity, blogs can enhance a corporation's efforts to maintain long-term relationships with its publics. After all, the Web benefits communication and "public relations is and always will be about human relationships" (Kent & Taylor, 1998, 331). The collaboration, participation, and ongoing interactions fostered by blogs have transformed the tool into a medium, which allows consumers to become co-creators of a corporate brand through constant dialogue with a company.

This study analyzed the number of tools implemented by corporate blogs to illicit interactivity between a company and its consumers. To create the most interactivity and dialogue between itself and its publics, a corporation should include a majority of navigation, multimedia, and communication tools within its blog. That would include the use of 5 or more navigation features, 2 or more multimedia features, and all 4 multimedia features as mentioned in Table 1 (Cho & Huh, 2010). With the implementation of these tools, Cho and Huh suggest the relationship management outcomes of positivity, openness, social networking and sharing will come to fruition (2010, 40). Hence, the amount of interactive blog tools used will increase the possibility of building and maintaining a two-way relationship between an organization and its public—further illustration of the connection between dialogic and relationship management frameworks.



Among the ten corporate blogs featured in the study, 100% had some form of navigation tool, 60% had at least one multimedia tool, and 100% had at least two additional communication tools. From the analysis, it can be concluded that while all ten corporations understand the importance of interacting with publics among all mediums of communication, only one corporation, Cisco Systems, achieved all set parameters described in Table 1. While some tools are used, the lack of total implementation suggests these corporations are not utilizing blogs to their full interactive potential. Multimedia tools, such as video, podcasts, and surveys, are the least utilized and if used, can potentially increase relationships and dialogue between a company and its consumers through secondary channels of communication (Cho & Huh, 2010, 36).

The content analysis provided by this research paper demonstrates the link between the dialogic theory, interactivity, public relations, and blogs. Yet, as with any research, this study has limitations. Although the content analysis included corporate blogs from a well-known list, the *Fortune* 500, the sample size was too small to conduct advanced analysis. Furthermore, this research is unable to link blog usage to specific relationships built over time. A longitudinal study conducted with corporate communicators could further test the link. In the end, the number of corporate blogs is growing, and future research should be done to analyze more blogs of a wider variety to fully understand the interactive possibilities of blogs in a corporate setting.

“Blogs are different, not better or worse than radio, television or print, and the best blogs are the ones that truly take advantage of the unique strengths of the medium” (Bonk, 2008, 68). If used properly, and maintained regularly, a blog can facilitate interactivity while building relationships between an organization and its publics.

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## 8. Appendix

### 8.1 Photographs of Blogs Analyzed

#### 8.1.1 Amazon.com (aws.typepad.com)

## Amazon Web Services Blog

Amazon Web Services, Products, Tools, and Developer Information...



RECENT POSTS

- Amazon CloudFront Object TTL Slashed!
- It Takes More Than a Volcano to Stop an AWS Event
- SOASTA OLAP Engine for Performance Testing
- Croon My Tune - Create A Singing Greeting Using Mechanical Turk
- Amazon Relational Database Service Now Available in Europe
- New release: tutorial for ADFS with Amazon EC2
- New Elastic MapReduce Feature: Bootstrap Actions
- New Elastic Load Balancing Feature: Sticky Sessions
- Introducing the Amazon Simple Notification Service
- From Our Support Team: Elastic Load Balancing Tips and Tricks

### Amazon CloudFront Object TTL Slashed!

By popular demand, we've reduced the minimum TTL (Time To Live) for [Amazon CloudFront](#) from 24 hours down to just one hour. This means that you can now use CloudFront to distribute content that changes from hour to hour.

As has always been the case, you will set the expiration time using the Cache-Control, Pragma, or Expires headers, per [RFC 2616](#). Note that you will set these values on your [Amazon S3](#) objects as [S3 Metadata](#). S3 sends the metadata to CloudFront in the form of HTTP headers. You may want to read Mark Nottingham's [Caching Tutorial](#) to learn more about the ins and outs of caching.

Most of the popular S3 tools and toolkits give you the ability to set custom headers when you upload objects to S3.

-- Jeff;

April 20, 2010 in [Amazon CloudWatch](#) | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) | [TrackBack \(0\)](#)


### It Takes More Than a Volcano to Stop an AWS Event

Despite the recent eruption of the Eyjafjallajökull volcano in Iceland, the [AWS Cloud for the Enterprise](#) event will still take place in London later this week (Thursday, April 22, to be exact).

Amazon CTO [Werner Vogels](#) has made his way from Iceland to Glasgow and is now on a train to London. He'll be there in plenty of time for the event.

The show must go on!

-- Jeff;



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USEFUL LINKS

- Amazon Web Services
- AWS Solutions
- AWS Products
- AWS Service Health Dashboard
- AWS Developer Forums
- Media/Analyst Inquiries
- Add me to your TypePad People list

#### 8.1.2 Cisco Systems (blogs.cisco.com)



## The Platform

Opinions and Insights from Cisco

Join the Conversation

The Platform

- Channels
- Collaboration
- Data Center Networks
- Digital Consumer
- Digital Media Rev
- Ecolibrium
- Emerging Countries
- High Tech Policy
- Innovation
- Inside Cisco IT
- Mobility
- Security
- SP360: Service Provider
- Virtual Environments
- Web Experience

April 23, 2010

### Cisco and the Red Cross Launch Global Volunteer Initiative

Coinciding with [National Volunteer Week 2010](#), [the American Red Cross](#) and Cisco recently [announced](#) the creation of one of the largest corporate employee volunteer programs in the history of the Red Cross. To help prepare their communities for, and respond to, natural and other disasters when and where they strike, Cisco employees around the world will participate in emergency response training provided by the Red Cross. Volunteers will learn about applying essential principles to disaster response; providing mass care related to first aid, shelter, food and supply distribution; and about identifying volunteer opportunities.






In recognition of [Cisco's 25th anniversary](#), Chairman and CEO John Chambers called on Cisco employees to perform 200,000 collective hours of community service by year's end. Also, during a recent employee volunteer fair at Cisco's Silicon Valley campus, [California State Secretary of Service and Volunteering, Karen Baker](#), remarked on Cisco's 360 degree approach to volunteering or "doing volunteering on steroids."

[Read More.](#)

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Cisco Around the Web

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### 8.1.3 Dell (direct2dell.com)

[Dell.com](#) » [Community](#) » [Blogs](#) » [Direct2Dell](#)




## Direct2Dell

The Official Dell Corporate Blog




### Featured Content




**Dell Facebook Fans "Plant a Tree For a Friend"**

21 Apr 2010 2:47 PM


It's hard to believe that April 22, 2010 will be the 40th anniversary of Earth Day. What was once an event celebrated only within the United States, Earth Day is now celebrated around the globe with hundreds of millions participating in over 184 countries. In honor of Earth Day we have created the "Plant [Read More...](#)

**Dell Kicks it to 10GbE at Interop 2010**

Posted to [Dell TechCenter](#) on 20 Apr 2010 4:27 PM

**Dell Takes the Reins in Online Commerce**

Posted to [DellShares](#) on 19 Apr 2010 9:21 AM

**Dell Community Performance Update**

Posted to [Direct2Dell](#) on 15 Apr 2010 9:54 PM

### 8.1.4 eBay (ebaychatter.com)

[Home](#) > [Community](#) > [The Chatter](#)

[Chatter blog home page](#) | [Contact the blog team](#)

# the Chatter

EBAY'S BLOG ABOUT THE COMPANY AND THE COMMUNITY

### Welcome

Welcome to the new home of **the Chatter!** We'll be bringing you the latest word on eBay...


### About Us


[Meet the blog team](#)


### Search


[Search the Chatter](#)


### Syndication

 [RSS](#) [What is RSS?](#)

 [MY Yahoo!](#)

 [Google](#)

 [newsGator](#)

 [Bloglines](#)

[Get updates via email](#)

[Set this as Your Homepage](#)


### Recent Auctions On eBay

Posted by [Griff](#) on November 30, 2008 at 06:22 PM in [Antiques & Collectibles News](#) | [Permalink](#)

Auctions are still going strong on eBay as indicated by the following sampling of ten listings from across the spectrum of antiques and collectibles which sold on eBay in the last 30 days. Our lead story is a rare collectible album:

#### Rare Beatles Album Sells for Premium on eBay

An extremely rare copy of the Beatles White Album - [Beatles - White Album UK 1968 Mono LP Cover No.0000005](#) - sold on eBay on Nov 23rd for **\$29,141** (GBP 19,201.00)



The seller, agm67, offered the following description of the item:

The Beatles' (more commonly known as 'The White Album') was released exactly 40 years ago on 22nd November 1968. Widely held to be one of the most influential albums of all-time, it was recently given the number one position in the '200 Rarest Records of All Time' by 'Record Collector' magazine. The two-record set, housed in a plain white cover was designed by Richard Hamilton and each carried its own unique number stamped on the front cover. Copies numbered 0000001 to 0000004 were originally given to the members of The Beatles themselves and as yet, none of these first four numbers have emerged onto the market.

Scuncio 37

### 8.1.5 Google (googleblog.blogspot.com)

The Official



Blog

Insights from Googlers into our products, technology, and the Google culture.

Search

×

powered by Google™

 Site Feed

 Google

549K readers

BY FEEDBURNER

Archives

Archives

More Blogs from Google

Visit our [directory](#) for more information about Google blogs.

Sign up to get our posts via email. No more than one message per day.

Subscribe

Delivered by [FeedBurner](#)

Recent posts from our blogs

## Helping you read and write foreign scripts with Google Transliteration and Script Converter


4/23/2010 08:20:00 AM  
(Cross-posted from the [Google Translate Blog](#))

For many Internet users, it is not always easy to write in languages that use unique character sets like Hindi, Hebrew and Arabic. Most computer keyboards only allow for the input of Roman characters (the alphabet used by most Western languages) and converting between scripts can be difficult. To make this process easier we launched an improved version of [Google Transliteration](#) at the end of last year, a service which enables you to phonetically convert Roman letters into a variety of other scripts.

Today we're delighted to announce support for five new languages: [Amharic](#), [Tigrinya](#), [Hebrew](#), [Oriya](#) and [Sinhalese](#). This brings the total up to 22 languages spoken across Africa, South Asia, Eastern Europe and the Middle East. These new languages are currently available at <http://www.google.com/transliterate>.

Since you can't use Google Transliteration offline we also launched the transliteration based "Input Method Editor" (IME) earlier this year. Once you [download and install](#) the Google Transliteration IME (don't worry, it's free), you can type a word the way it sounds using Roman characters and the software will convert the word to its native script. For example, typing "hamesha" in Google Hindi IME transliterates into Hindi as: हमेशा.

### 8.1.6 Hewlett Packard (hp.com/#connect)

 SHOP PRODUCTS & SERVICES EXPLORE & CREATE CONNECT WITH OTHERS SUPPORT & DRIVERS

COMMUNITY HOME

Home

Welcome to the HP Community! Feel free to browse the site, read our blogs, watch videos, leave a comment, or start a discussion.

BLOGS

International

Innovation

Inside HP

Inside the Datacenter

Networking

Printing and Imaging

Security Software

Servers

Services

Enterprise Software


Storage

Tech Trends

See all blogs

ASK. ANSWER. EXPERIENCE.

Ask a question, find an answer, share a solution & read blogs on a wide variety of topics with HP communities.



Search this site

HP News Room

» Latest news, fast facts, HP history, and financial info.


HP BLOGGING CODE OF CONDUCT

Get started by reading the HP Blogging Code of Conduct. ▶

Scuncio 38



### 8.1.7 Intel (blogs.intel.com)



**Blogs@Intel**

Recent Posts   Archives   About this Blog   Contact

Visualize this! Michael Gourlay on Fluid Simulation in games  
posted by Arti Gupta (Intel) on April 23, 2010 at Intel Software Network Blogs

Welcome to another episode of Visualize this! the show where we talk about game development. My guest today is Michael Gourlay Senior Software Engineer at Electronic Arts, ( lead on Madden). Michael also teaches at University of Central Florida (UCF) Florida Interactive Entertainment Academy (FIEA). Michael spoke with me about Fluid Simulation [...]

[Read More at Intel Software Network Blogs](#)

tagged: **fluid simulation**

Want a faster calculated hash and a block cipher? "Stitch" them!  
posted by Max Locktyukhin (Intel) on April 22, 2010 at Intel Software Network Blogs

Hello. We just released the very interesting paper showing the way to speed up a pair of independent functions or algorithms, like a block cipher and a hash often called sequentially on the same input buffer. One can greatly improve the utilization of the underlying microarchitecture's execution resources by combining two algorithms and computing them together at [...]

[Read More at Intel Software Network Blogs](#)

**Most Popular Posts**

- Intel Education Service Corps: Week One in Kenya**  
by Noel Durrant in CSR@Intel (6 Comments)
- IDF, skeptical students, 22nm and the relentless pursuit of Moore's Law**  
by Kelin Kuhn in Technology@Intel (4 Comments)
- IDF2010, 开启个性化互联网新时代**  
by 杨叙 (Ian Yang) in 博客@英特尔中国 (3 Comments)
- From Arizona to Azerbaijan - Enthusiasm and Dedication Make a Difference**

### 8.1.8 Microsoft (blogs.technet.com/microsoft\_blog)



**The Official Microsoft® Blog**  
NEWS & PERSPECTIVE FROM MICROSOFT   MICROSOFT NEWS CENTER →

**Weekend Reading: Privacy, Partnerships, and Power Management**

There was a poignant piece of news on Thursday – the death of personal computing pioneer **Ed Roberts** at age 68. In the mid-1970s, Roberts created the **MITS Altair 8800 computer**. It was this machine, of course, that caught the attention of two young software dreamers—Bill Gates and Paul Allen – and set in motion a chain of events that has helped create the connected world we live in today. From that hobbyist computer 35 years ago, there are now far more than a billion PCs worldwide, and the PC industry provides millions of jobs around the globe. And the story of Roberts' life didn't end with his contributions to the PC industry. After selling his computer company, he went to medical school and became a doctor in Georgia, touching the lives of thousands of patients. Bill Gates and Paul Allen shared some **thoughts about Roberts** on Thursday.

This week's news only begins to hint at the scope and diversity of the technology revolution that Roberts helped to launch:

- As more of our lives go online, privacy becomes an even bigger issue. So this past week Microsoft joined with other big technology companies and advocacy groups to push Congress for **stronger online privacy laws**. As part of the **Digital Due Process** coalition, we're asking for stronger controls over how someone's online data can be accessed, as well as better safeguards for location-based data, such as that collected by wireless telephone companies. **We think it's** the right thing to do, and hope Congress takes action.
- There are increasing signs that the economy is slowly improving, but

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## 8.1.10 Xerox (atyourservice.blogs.xerox.com)

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## Everyday is Earth Day at Xerox

April 22nd, 2010

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Happy 40<sup>th</sup> Earth Day!! Today April 22<sup>nd</sup> is the day set aside to increase awareness and appreciation of the environment. Earth Day was founded in 1970 by U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin as a teach-in about the environment. Earth Day has become an international day of awareness observed in virtually every country in the world. Earth Day was and is a grassroots effort to save all aspects of the environment from the impact of the human race and our waste. The world produces approximately 1 billion tons or 2, 000,000,000,000 – that's 2 trillion pounds of solid waste per year. It



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